

Sanctification

Matthew 5:48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

VIDEO CLIP: The Perfects

For how many of you is your day-to-day life quite different from that? That's not quite how my spirituality translates into real living! Actually, according to the Bible, things work very differently from that! (And by the way, the word "perfect" in the Bible means "complete" or "mature"!)

Illustration: Rose not understanding watering, fertilizer, winter, pruning

When we understand the ways that God grows us as believers, what a difference it makes! It doesn't make life perfect. It doesn't mean that growing will never hurt. But it does enable us to understand what God is up to in our lives.

The Bible word for God's process of growth is **SANCTIFICATION**. Sanctified means **SET APART**.

In the Old Testament it was most often the places and objects of worship that were called "set apart" for God's honor and use:

- Holy priests (Exodus 28:41)
- Holy garments (Exodus 29:21)
- A holy altar (Exodus 30:10)
- The Holy Land (Leviticus 27:21)

In the New Testament it is God's people who are "set apart" for God's honor and use.

2 Timothy 2:19-22 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work. Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

Paul is teaching us three important concepts here:

1. That sanctification is a process of maturing that takes place over time ("sanctify you WHOLLY").
2. That we are sanctified through God's power, not our own ("faithful is he that calleth you, WHO ALSO WILL DO IT").
3. That sanctification involves all three parts of man's being ("SPIRIT and SOUL and BODY").

Romans 8:28-30 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

Justification happened the moment we were saved. Glorification will happen when we get to heaven. Can you see sanctification in these verses? It's there! Sanctification ("conformed to the image of his Son") is what is happening in our lives right now. That makes sanctification a subject that we all should be very interested in!

"SALVATION IS THE MOST ELASTIC WORD IN THE BIBLE"			
Time	Past	Present	Future
Experience	"I was saved"	"I am being saved"	"I will be saved"
Theological Term	Justified	Sanctified	Glorified
I am saved from sin's	Penalty	Power	Presence
My holiness before God is	Positional	Experiential	Eternal
Sanctification occurs in my	Spirit	Soul (Mind)	Body

Sanctified comes from the same word as SAINT. In the Bible, all believers are called saints.

I AM NOT TRYING TO GROW TOWARD SAINTHOOD – I AM A GROWING SAINT.

2 Peter 3:18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

Look at the person next to you and say, “Hi, I am Saint _____.” That was hard for some of you. How can you be a saint? Most people use this term for a person who they think rarely, if ever, sins. We use the designation “saint” for people who we feel are too old to sin. “Dear old saints,” we call them. You never hear anyone talk about “dear young saints.” The Bible, however, teaches that every born-again believer is a saint. The New Testament refers to believers as saints 56 times. Even the people in Corinth, with all their struggles with sin, were called saints.

Here is why it is important to know that you are a saint: Until you see who you are in Christ, you’ll always be fighting your feelings as you grow. You’ll think, “Of course I sinned again, I’m just a sinner anyway. Of course I can’t understand the Bible. Of course that ministry failed, who do I think I am anyway?”

Accept it on faith that you have been sanctified. As a believer you are a saint! “Of course my prayers were answered. Of course God’s Word is changing me. Of course God used me in that situation!”

**BUT I DON’T FEEL LIKE SOME KIND OF SAINT! JOIN THE CLUB!
Your growth as a Christian has its foundation in faith.**

Without understanding the doctrine of sanctification, you can easily find yourself falling into the traps of ...

- LEGALISM (trying to grow in Christ based on your own efforts)
- LICENSE (presuming on God’s grace no matter how you live)

Sanctification refers to two things:

- **The FINISHED ACTION of being made holy**

Hebrews 10:10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

1 Corinthians 1:30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

- **The DAILY PROCESS of becoming holy**

1 Peter 2:2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

Hebrews 12:14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

2 Peter 3:18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

TWO PROCESSES IN ONE VERSE:

- **Hebrews 10:14 (KJV)** For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.
- **Hebrews 10:14 (NLT)** For by that one offering he perfected forever all those whom he is making holy.
- **Hebrews 10:14 (NIV)** Because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.
- **Hebrews 10:14 (MES)** It was a perfect sacrifice by a perfect person to perfect some very imperfect people. By that single offering, he did everything that needed to be done for everyone who takes part in the purifying process.

It’s a lot like marriage – you say “I do” and then spend the rest of your life living out those two words. The finished action of the wedding ceremony has to be lived out in the daily process of married life.

God has already made me holy, and God is making me holy! There’s a spiritual tension in those two statements. It seems like only one or the other should be true, but both are true. Much Bible doctrine is like that:

- Jesus is both God and man
- God is sovereign but yet He gives us free choice
- God is merciful but He is also just
- I am not saved by good works, but I am saved unto good works
- We expect His return at any moment, but we occupy until He comes

Sanctification is not the process of me trying really hard to become something I am not. Sanctification is the process of beginning to live out what I already am!

At the moment of salvation, God changed my spiritual DNA!

This is a matter of faith, not sight. When you become a believer, you don’t look in the mirror and see a different face – you see the same old you. You don’t get a new house and a new car and a new job – that all stays the same. Even your personality pretty much stays the same.

So what does change? What is new? Only the most important things about you – things you can’t see that will last forever!

WHO IS THIS NEW PERSON?

I am a light in the world (Matthew 5:14)
I am a child of God (John 1:12)
I am Christ's friend (John 15:15)
I am chosen and appointed by Christ to bear fruit (John 15:16)
I am a slave of righteousness (Romans 6:18)
I am a member of Christ's body (1 Corinthians 12:27, Ephesians 5:30)
I am a minister of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18-19)
I am righteous and holy (Ephesians 4:24)
I am hidden with Christ in God (Colossians 3:3)
I am chosen and dearly loved (Colossians 3:12)
I am born again (1 Peter 1:23)
I am alive with Christ (Ephesians 2:5)
I am the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21)
I am to be like Christ when He returns (1 John 3:1-2)
I am a saint (Ephesians 1:1, 2 Corinthians 1:1-2)
I am a child of light and not of darkness (1 Thessalonians 5:5)
I am an enemy of the devil (1 Peter 5:8)
I am born of God and the Evil One cannot touch me (1 John 5:18)
I am victorious (1 John 5:4)
I am more than a conqueror (Romans 8:37)
I am a citizen of Heaven (Philippians 3:20, Ephesians 2:6)
I am God's workmanship (Ephesians 2:10)
I am a joint heir with Christ (Romans 8:17)
I am a temple, a dwelling place of God (1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19)
I am a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17)